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Jonathan Bradford.

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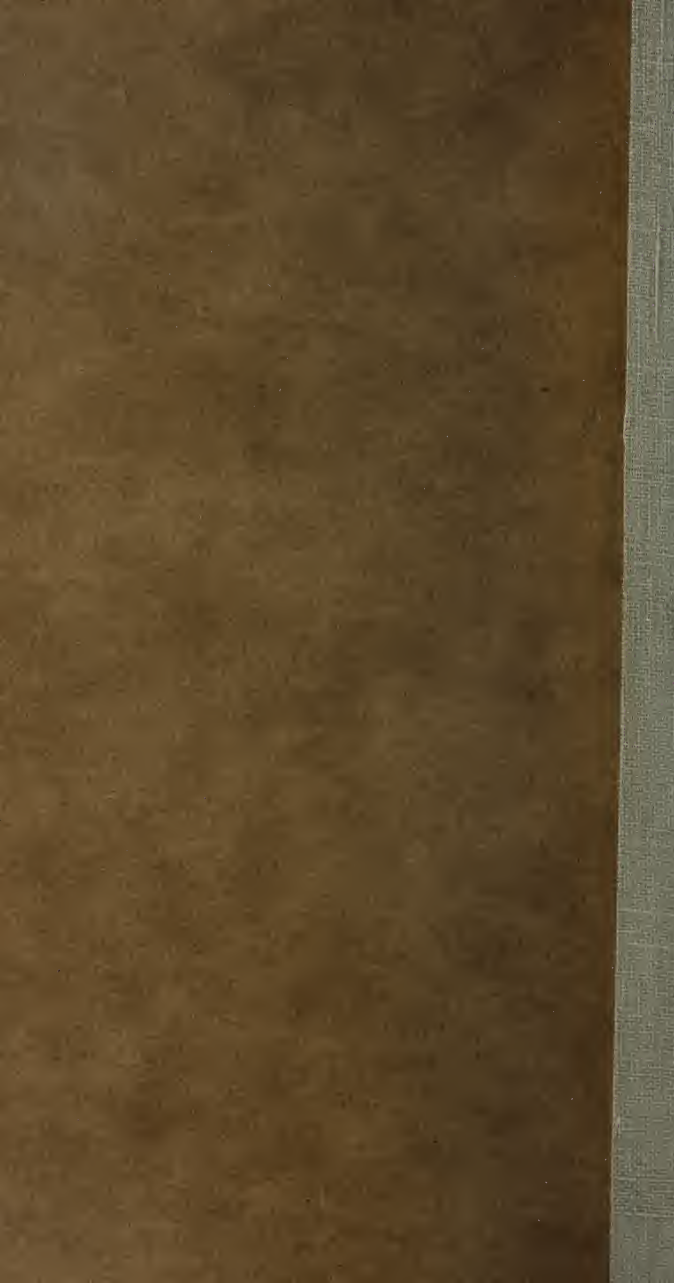
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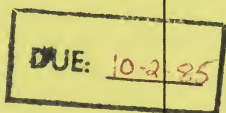


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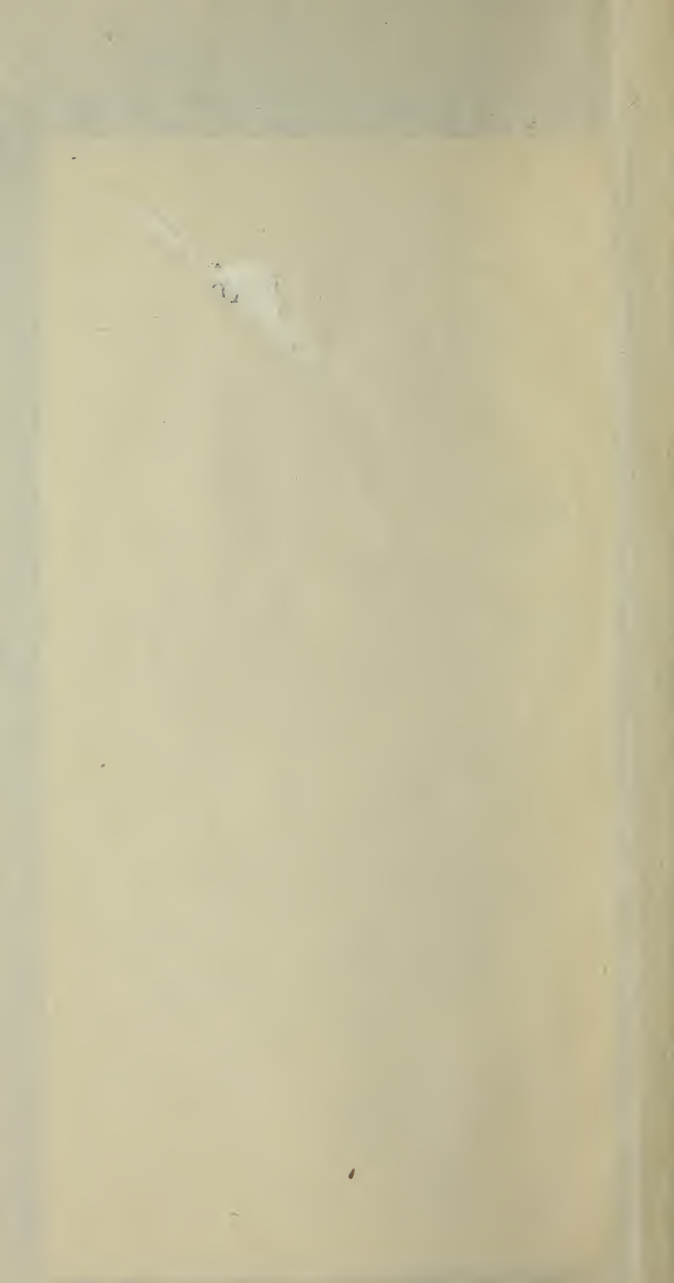
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SEP 25 1985



JONATHAN BRAND;

OR,

THE MURDER AT THE FIVE D-SIDE INN.

A Melo-Drama,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY

EDWARD FITZBALL, Esq.

AUTHOR OF

*"Walter Brand," "Margaret's Ghost," "Tom Cringle," "The
Deserted Mill," "The Wood Devil," "The Black Hand,"
"The Lord of the Isles," &c., &c.*

THOMAS HAILES LACY,

89, STRAND, LONDON.

SURREY THEATRE.

Wednesday, June 12th, 1833,

Will be presented (first time) with New Scenery, by MARSHALL, and New Music by JOLLY, an entirely new original Domestic Drama, (written expressly for this Theatre, by the Author of "The Red Rover," "Innkeeper of Abbeville," "Flying Dutchman," "Soldier's Widow," "The Pilot," &c.) called

JONATHAN BRADFORD

Or, the Murder at the Roadside Inn.

This original Drama is founded on Real Facts. Jonathan Bradford actually kept an inn on the London Road to Oxford, and bore an unexceptionable character. The extraordinary affair which led to the construction of this Drama, was the *conversation of the whole county*. The innocent and unfortunate Landlord, accused of a cruel murder, perpetrated under his very roof, and borne down by a long train of overwhelming *circumstantial evidence*, in vain pleaded not guilty; all conspired to condemn him; his assertions were of little avail; never was presumptive conviction more strong. There was little need of comment from the Judge in summing up the evidence, no room appeared for extenuation, and the Jury brought in the Prisoner GUILTY, even without going out of the box!!!

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| JONATHAN BRADFORD (<i>Landlord of the Inn by the Roadside</i>) | Mr. OSBALDISTON. |
| DAN MACRAISY (<i>alias Gentleman O'Conner, alias Ratcatching Jack, alias &c., &c.</i>) | Mr. H. WALLACK. |
| FARMER NELSON (<i>Father to Bradford's Wife</i>) | Mr. RUMBALL. |
| MR. HAYES (<i>Merchant retiring from business</i>) | Mr. D. PITT. |
| CALEB SCRUMMIDGE (<i>an aspiring Watchmaker, of Seven Dials—aristocracy the mainspring of his ambition</i>) | Mr. VALE. |
| With a Parody on the popular Song of "The Sea, the Sea, the open Sea." | |
| JACK RACKBOTTLE (<i>New Boots at the Inn, wishing to supply, in every respect, the place of Old Boots</i>) | Mr. ROGERS. |
| LAWYER DOZEY | Mr. YOUNG. |
| SURVEYOR RODPOLE | Mr. BANNISTER. |

SERJEANT SAM Mr. LEE.
 CORPORAL Mr. BRUNTON.
 SALLY SIGHABOUT (*Widow to the Old Boots*) Miss VINCENT.
 With a new Song, "A kind old Man came Wooing."
 ANN (*Wife to Bradford*) Mrs. W. WEST.
 ANN and JANE (*her Children*) Misses BRUNTON & ELLIS.

EXTERIOR of the GEORGE INN, on the OXFORD ROAD.

BELIGHTED OAK LANE.

A N O T H E R V I E W O F T H E I N N,

Showing also the Inner Apartments, comprising

The Bar, the little Back Parlor, Mr. Hayes' Apartment, & the Two-bedded Room!

In this peculiar Scene, an effort will be made (never yet attempted on any Stage) so to harmonize Four Actions as to produce ONE STRIKING EFFECT!

T H E M U R D E R O F M R. H A Y E S !

ARRIVAL OF THE SOLDIERY:—APPREHENSION OF BRADFORD.

T H E S T R O N G R O O M : E S C A P E T H R O U G H T H E R O O F !

Interior of the Manor Vault, with Iried Window and Broken Tomb.

The Inn, and Road conducting to the newly erected Gibbet on the Heath, intended for the

EXECUTION OF JONATHAN BRADFORD!

822
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JONATHAN BRADFORD.

JONATHAN BRADFORD.

ACT I.

SCENE FIRST.—*The Exterior of a Road-side Inn; the Road enters by the R., passes under an arched sign in C., "The George Inn," and then going through a turnpike gate at back, disappears in the distant country. A direction post on the R., "To Oxford."—Evening.*

At the rising of the curtain, JACK discovered cleaning bottles at a horse trough.

Air,—JACK.

A lad at an inn leads a stirring life
Each moment his consequence swells,
He brushes the beau from the top to the toe,
And is always in quest by the bells.
Content he remains just to run, rub and scrub,
Till Love with a kind of a way of its own,
Like the shot in this bottle, steals into his heart,
And shakes him just thus up and down.
And shakes, &c.

JACK. Half-a-year to-day, by the notches I cut in the horse-trough, since I became boots to the George Inn, here, on the Oxford Road—the very best house of call, all the way from Lunnun, and kept by Mister Jonathan Bradford; though I say it, as honest and warm-hearted a landlord as ever poured out a noggin of ale, or drove cork into bottle; no double scoring here;—no short measure;—no adulterated liquors;—none of your Lunnun tricks;—no, no! money's worth for money, is my master's maxim, aye, and missus's, too. I always notices when she do measure out the peppermints and the Hollanses at the bar, that she do like to see the glass run over, just as if she set it sparkling by her own eyes. Then, as for boots, where'll they find a more neaterer fit than I?—not in Lunnun, I calculates; but as the song says, as I was a singing of—

“Content I remain just to rub, run, and scrub, &c.”

Enter SALLY SIGHABOUT, R., over bridge, nursing one of Bradford's children, and leading the other.

SALLY. (R.) Heigho! upon my word, Mister Rackbottle, you seems uncommon werry merry, this evening.

JACK. To be sure I do, Missis Sally; it's a bad conscience indeed, as is melancholy without a cause. Why ben't you as merry as I? You've an easy place on't here.

SALLY. I merry, indeed! I that haven't been a widderer more than six months.

JACK. To be sure; to do the thing genteely, you must remain a widderer six months more.

SALLY. That's the worst on't—that is—I meant to say——

JACK. That it's a great pity having lost your old boots, you cannot immediately tak up wi' new boots—that's me.

SALLY. Indeed, Mr. Jack, I meant no such thing; and though my husband was old, and we warn't united above three months, I frets about him more nor I'll ever let any body know; you shan't know it, it's a nights I thinks on him most; sich dreams! sich happeritions!—would you believe it. 'twas but last night I thought he was jealous on me, as usual, and there he was a raging, and a stamping, and a running arter me with the old boot, round and round the— (JACK *laughs*) You don't wants to laugh; it was only a wision——

JACK. Which the sooner you changes for reality, the better. What's a female voman of herself? she's a boot without a fut—a brush without a back—a currycomb without a horse—a——

SALLY. You're right, Mr. Jack, I feels that you are right; then there's that little bit of money my poor dear husband left me; 'tis a mouldering away, as I may say, in my keeping; it might serve to set up an honest couple in an honest way——

JACK. (*eagerly*) To be sure; now there's the little ale house, the "Dog in Pattens," across the moor. With an active little landlord, something of my figure, and a genteel, pretty landlady, something of your figure, eh?

SALLY. He, he, he! none of your seductivating flatteries, Mr. Rackbottle; I never give not no encouragement to sich chimeries, not I! I, in my sittiwation, a widderer only six months—oh! but—(*whispering*) if, when the children are abed, you likes to come into the little back kitchen, and advise me for the best, I'll take it as a kindly consideration; for I'm very unhappy, though I doesn't chuse, as I said afore, not to let nobody know it—heigho!

JACK. But, Missis Sally—Widder Sighabout, I means——

SALLY. Hush! here's missus. (JACK *runs and begins to clean bottles—to children*) Play pretty! play pretty! Here we go up, up, up, &c. (*singing and tossing CHILD*)

Enter ANN, from the Inn, R.

ANN. (*crosses to C.*) Well, Sally, did you see your master returning from Oxford?

SALLY. No, Missus; I walked to the top of the hill, too; but little Jane fell fast asleep in my arms, and little Mary rubbed her eyes so, that the sooner they're a bed the better, says I; and then I can sit down in the kitchen, and do a little needlework—a stitch in time saves nine. (*meaningly to JACK*)

ANN. (*kissing CHILDREN*) Dear children, how beautiful they are!

Little Jane, so like her father!—that open smile,

'Tis his; the sunshine of an honest heart.

Take them to bed. When Jonathan returns,

He shall come and kiss them in their sleep:

If there's a holy theft on earth, sure that is one,

When a fond parent steals, from innocent lips,

Affections' purest draught, and closes up the ruby seal again,

With love's own signet. Take them to bed, good Nurse.

Music. Exit SALLY, with CHILDREN, into inn, R.

ANN. Hark! heard I not the wheels of a chaise?

JACK. Yes, sure: they be driving into the inn yard—one, two, three gentlemen, and measter with them.

ANN. You are right, 'tis Jonathan; he comes this way.

JACK. I'll run and tend the horses.

Exit back of inn, R., over bridge.

ANN. I'm glad he is no later on the road,

And that he comes not by himself from Oxford.

These highwaymen who haunt, like snakes, the hedges,

Are ready at all hours to dart forth. No man

Is safe travelling, and alone.

Dear Jonathan, welcome home!

Music.

Enter JONATHAN BRADFORD, over bridge, R.

BRAD. (R.) Give me a kiss, wife; another!

The wine is good that smacks upon the lip:

How are the bantlings?

ANN. (L.) Well, and both abed.

BRAD. I've brought the lemons and the nutmegs,

The sugar, and the comfits for the children:

I've brought besides—what think you this is, Ann?

(*shewing a small packet*)

ANN. What can it be?

BRAD. I'll tell thee.

It is a pair of buckles; though not diamonds,

Glittering bright they shine, as stars at even;

Not costly are they, save as love enriches,

And turneth all things golden. Wear them, Ann,

For my sake ; to-morrow is your birthday ;
A happy day we'll make it, come what may.

ANN. Come what may ? Oh, Jonathan, say not so ;
A thousand things might happen. In this world,
Nothing, you know, is certain.

BRAD. Ah, thus you women
Always must be looking for the storm.
Well, 'tis your nature ; if on our joys ye lour,
Still, in our griefs, ye build the rainbow up,
And send the dove of promise to our hearts.

ANN. Forgive me, husband—I will wear these buckles
To-morrow ; it shall be a holiday, a merry one,
With Heaven's good leave.

BRAD. Bravely said ! I have rare news beside ;
The Parliament hath ta'en the tax off wine and spirits ;
That's profitable to me.
Besides, the labouring classes will have more comforts,
And that's what ought to be in a free country.

ANN. Aye, in any country.

BRAD. True !

For as the hive drone is to the bee, and the bee to the
hive drone,

So are the rich to the poor,—the poor to the rich. (*crosses L.*)
But in, Ann, and prepare supper : I bring customers.

ANN. Indeed ! who are they ?

BRAD. Lawyer Dozey, and Surveyor Rodpole,
With one Mr. Adam Hayes, a wealthy man ;
He has bought the Manor House, and the purchase
Will be completed here. Look to your beds yourself ;
They sleep at our inn—prepare to welcome them.

ANN. I will,—and instant spread the supper cloth.

Exit into inn, R.

BRAD. This way, gentlemen ; this way !

Enter MR. HAYES, DOZEY, and RODPOLE, over bridge, R.

HAYES. (L. C.) 'Tis a pleasant house, this inn of yours
Bradford.

ROD. (R.) Just eleven miles, half a furlong, two rods, and
three barleycorns distance from Oxford, by mensuration, I'll
be judged by any court—eh, lawyer ?

DOZEY. (R. C.) Why, I can't tell—that is to say, the afore-
said—(*yawns*) I hope supper's ready ; I'm as sleepy as the
Cicero's head on my bookcase, at my chambers in the Temple.
Yaw ! I hope the beds are good.

BRAD. (L.) I trust, excellent ; and the supper and the wine
equally so.

HAYES. How long have you been landlord ?

BRAD. Scarcely yet a year, sir; but pray, gentlemen, walk in; (*crosses to R.*) and I hope we shall make you as satisfied with the new welcome, as you appear to have been with the old. This way, gentlemen. *They exit into Inn, R.*

Enter SALLY from behind the inn, R.

SALLY. Jack! Jack! Heigho!—yes, it's a melancholy life, one leads without even a morsel of a husband; and so afraid I am of ghosts—not that I'm in any hurry to get married; oh, dear me, no—only when the men are always teasing, what can a lone widderer do?

Song—SALLY.

A kind old man came wooing to me,
When my age it was scarce eighteen;
He ask'd with a sigh, if his bride I'd be,
And he'd make me as rich as a queen.
No parents I had, no money I had,
Nor sweetheart that ever prov'd true—
If young men won't, and old men will,
Lawks, what can a poor maiden do?
Heigho—heigho!

Lawks, what can a poor maiden do?

And now I'm a widow you see,
Though my age it is scarce nineteen,
With gold in my purse, every lad would be,
Yes, my partner to dance on the green;
No brother have I, no sister have I,
With no children to cling unto—
When old men die, and young men sigh,
Lawks, what can a lone widow do?
Heigho—heigho!

Lawks, what can a young widow do?

Exit into inn, R.

SCENE SECOND.—*Another Exterior of the Inn. (1st grooves)*

Enter DAN MACRAISY, L., beckoning.

MACRA. Here's the George Inn, kept by Jonathan Bradford; he's a new one, and doesn't know me. Caleb!—divil burn the fellow, it's always before at being behind he is. Mister Caleb Scrummidge, is it coming you are, or not, eh?

Enter CALEB SCRUMMIDGE, L., timidly.

CALEB. Now, Dan—I say, Dan!

MACRA. Dan, the divil!—what d'ye mean by Dan? It's Squire O'Connor, I am here; wid you, my cousin garmin, from my beautiful estate in Kilkenny.

CALEB. I your cousin? Yes, you cozened me nicely, you did; prevailed on me to rob my master, Mister Timothy Tick, clock and watch maker, of Seven Dials, and run away vith you, to set up for a gentleman;—it's a gentleman wot's going tick, tick, tick, to the gallows as fast as a repeater wot's broke it's main spring.

MACRA. Always grumbling!—another word, and I'll lodge a bullet in your impenetrable sconce. Haven't I a schame to make your fortune?—haven't I heard that Mr. Hayes slapes there at the George Inn to-night, with a big purse of money in his pocket?—and don't I know every room in the house as if I was born in it?—and won't I transmogrify that bit of a big purse into my own pocket, as nately as if it was made to fit—eh?

CALEB. I feels an alter as neatly round my throat as if it was made to fit—oh!

MACRA. Courage!—you shall stand recorded——

CALEB. In the Newgate Calender, alongside of Highwayman Billy, and Hotpepper Jack;—a vheel vithin a vheel, as ve used to say at Seven Dials.

MACRA. (*near window*) Faith, it's a good supper I'm sniffing. Roast beef—horse radish—wine—brandy! (*peeping*)

CALEB. A good supper! wine! brandy!—that there winds me up into a horizontal position. Let's ask whether we may go in.

MACRA. Ask? Och, that's not the way to get anything. Sure wasn't that my own elegant mother's maxim:—"Dan," said she, in her dying injunction, the big tares tumbling down her ould cheeks, like grane gooseberries in the mackarel season;—"Dan," said she, "my only child—my pretty darlint, remember your poor mother's last advice; beg, borrow, and stale, if you wish to be respectable; but if once you takes up with dat dere modesty, it's out o'doors you'll be kicked intirely, by fools and rogues!" So I remembers de ould cratur's maxim, and dis is de way I does it. (*strutting*) Ho! landlord! fellow! Boots! ho! hem! (*sings*)

Air,—"St. Patrick was a Gentleman."

We independent gentlemen,

We stay at home at ase,

We kiss the girls, and kick the men,

And do just as we plase.

Exit, R.

CALEB. Well, if ever—what a religious old lady his mamma must have been! Now, my mother she always shut me up on a Sundays for playing at marlows on the tomb-stones, instead of going to church, and said the halfpenny a week she allowed

me for superfluities, was better than a guinea a day not honestly come by. Oh, my mother was a hignorant old cretur. Just see, now, if the landlord an't a scraping and a bowing to Dan as if he vas the Hearl of Hessex! Oho! here's to go for to come the gentleman myself, or I shan't get not no supper. (*struts about*) Vot ho! Landlord! feller! boots! ho! hem!

(*sings*) We hindependent gentlemen,
 We sits down at our ease,
 We heats roast beef, and drinks strong beer,
 And does just as we please.

I feels as if I vos born to be a gentleman as vell as Dan;—this is better than going to sea—the sea! The sea as I likes best, is that as flows from Vopping to Vindsor.

Song,—CALEB. *Air*,—"The Sea! The Sea!"

The sea, the sea! the hugly sea,
 So vide and deep, von't do for me;
 Blow me to Richmond from the Strand,
 In a wessel vot's ne'er out of sight o' land;
 On the nice green deck vere safe I ride,
 And kicks the shore on either side—
 On double stout, and bread, and 'am,
 Then, then's the time to stuff and cram;
 With the blue above, and the blue below,
 On a Sundays, there's a pretty go!
 If a storm should come, no matter, there,
 Your humberella is in the hair.

The sea, the sea, vere I vould dwell,
 Lies in the sound of sweet Bow bell;
 Vere the bargemen vhistles, and o' Saturday night,
 The little boys vashes their dingy backs white;
 I loves to sit on a barge of coals,
 And bob, with a frog on a pin, for soles.
 I vos vonce shipwreck'd off Battersea,
 And Sally a flopping 'long side of me,
 For to roll the vhistes of her eyes began,
 Like a mack'rel fried in a varming pan—
 Then drowned I thought ve both should be,
 And Crowner's inquest prove *felo de sea*.

And Crowner's, &c.

Exit, R.

SCENE THIRD.—*An Apartment in the Inn. Table and chairs.*

JONATHAN, HAYES, DOZEY, and RODPOLE *discovered*. JACK,
in waiting; they all sit.

HAYES. (*L. of table*) Drink freely, gentlemen; I pay to-night.

DOZEY. (*R. of table, up towards top*) That's vastly condescending.

ROD. (*R. bottom of table*) Correct by the Rule of Three.

BRAD. (*head of table*) You must not, sir, look to surpass us all.

In generosity ;—I've some rare old wine,
And cannot broach it to a better toast,
Than health to the new Lord of the Manor,—
To Mr. Hayes ;—What say you gentlemen ?

DOZEY. Admirable ! spoken like an orator !

ROD. Just, by mensuration.

HAYES. Nay, I cannot permit——

BRAD. We must enforce compliance ; excuse me, sir, (*rises*)
I will but brush the cobwebs from the bottles,
And straight again be with you.—Jack, this way.

Exit with JACK, L.

HAYES. Our host

Is of the true metal ; I'll recommend him.

DOZEY. He has a kind and grateful heart,
Correct in every sense of the law.

Re-enter BRADFORD, L., with bottle and cork-screw,—JACK with glasses, &c.

BRAD. Gentlemen, there are two strangers just arrived ;
The one, an Irishman, as he says, of condition,
Craves to be acquainted with this company.
Shall I plead excuses for denial ?

ROD. } Certainly ! certainly !

DOZEY. }

HAYES. Nay, at a roadside Inn, this were ungracious ;
A weary traveller should not of brother traveller
Lack good fellowship—eh ?

ROD. } Oh, if you say that——

DOZEY. }

HAYES. Invite them in. *Exit JACK, L.*

BRAD. (*drawing cork*) Fill, gentlemen.
Here's to the new Lord of the Manor !

Enter JACK, showing in DAN, L.

DAN. Stay ! —be aisy ! (*strutting from R. to L. and back again*)
It's myself will drain that toast ; myself, Janus O'Connor,
Esquire, on a pedestrian tour from my estate in Kilkenny, at
the company's sarvice. Fill, landlord, fill.

Enter CALEB, L.

CALEB. And for me, also. I'll drain it if it vos as deep as
the vell at Aldgate. A bumper, a bumper !

DAN. (*fiercely*) Kape your distance, fellow; stand behind, and remain silent, or I'll discharge you—(*aside, and showing a pistol*) or this. This valet of mine, gentlemen, is a little bit of a grane-horn, but for the sake of his honest parents, I kape him, and am willing to tache him better manners. A glass for me. (*JACK gives glass—they all drink HAYES's health in dumb show—DAN seated*)

CALEB. (*aside*) I'm to be his wally; he said he'd make me a gentleman; I suppose he means me to commence as a gentleman's gentleman—himmitations of my master; them's the first rudiments of my eddication, and if I says a vord, he'll blow my brains out vith that there pistol. Oh, I vishes I vos at Seven Dials again.

HAYES. Thanks, thanks, my friends; but I am not quite lord of the manor yet; the estate is not paid for.

DOZEY. But it will be, in the morning.

HAYES. When I have examined the title deeds, yes, on this very table, if you like. In good truth, I shall be glad to be disencumbered of the money; it's of considerable weight.

MACR. Faith, den, it's about your person you carry the amount, sir? It's a bag of money I have here, in my own coat pocket; but afraid I was of the highwaymen, I promise you; oh, the road swarms with the blackguards, pick-purses. I heard, too, toder day of a gentleman of my acquaintance, whose pouch them spalpeens had cunningly lightened of its guineas, and substituted pebbles in their stead, so dat when he was going to pay for an estate, as you may be going to do, may be, it was only pieces of brick-bat he had gotten in his purse after all.

HAYES. (*smiling*) That's not my case, for luckily I travelled hither with friends; and see, lawyer, the gold is all shining,—all counted ready,—ha! ha!

CALEB. (*catches DAN's eye*) Now he's going to put a clapper on that there purse, but how he'll do it is beyond the dial plate of my brains to pint out. That'll be rudiment No. 2 in my eddication.

HAYES. (*rising*) Host, with your leave, for I'm a man of regular habits, I'll retire for the night;—you know the chamber?

BRAD. Oh, yes! the one above the bar; my wife will attend to the bed herself—Sally will light you up stairs.

HAYES. That chamber, on my different journeys from London to Oxford, I've slept in for fifteen years;—I, one night, dreamt that I died there.

BRAD. (*starting*) Heaven forbid!

HAYES. Why, my friend? we must all die somewhere, and so that it be in charity with mankind, why not in that bed as

well as any other ? Good night ; we shall meet in the morning—now, a candle.

BRAD. I'll bear the light, sir.

Exit with HAYES, L.

MACR. (*aside*) In that chamber ! Sure, won't I slape in the two-bedded room ?—from the window—by the parapet. Caleb, the boot-jack. (*sharply*)

CALEB. (*starting*) The—the—the—boo—boo—jac——

MACR. The boot-jack, dolt ! sure can't you see I've my old vertigo coming on, and won't I get to bed at once ? and shan't you slape awake to watch me all night ?

CALEB. Vhot vithout my supper ?

MACR. (R. C.) Sup at breakfast, you most unfalin' of sarvants ! Ho, young man ! (*to JACK, who is coming down, L.*) Is the empty two-bedded room occupied above ?

JACK. (L.) No, sure ; does your honour know that chamber ?

MACR. Perfectly ! it will do for me and my man—if I find myself better, it's lie down he shall, on t'other bed ; faith, it's always consideration I like to show to a domestic, tho' he be ever so undesarving. Good night, gentlemen. Come along, sirrah ! it's my indulgence what ruins you intirely, and that's what all may see.

CALEB. But, really, I wants my——

MACR. (*showing pistol*) Here it is.

CALEB. But I don't like cold supper.

JACK. There's Sally will light your honour to bed—she be waiting for ye at foot o' stairs. *Exit CALEB and MACRAISY, L.*

JACK. Shall I clear the table, gentlemen ?

DOZEY. By all means.

JACK. Here, Bob, come and help to clear the table.

Enter SERVANT, R., who helps him to clear.

JACK. (*crosses to table for candle*) Missus bid me light a fire in the little back parlour, where gentlemen smokes and drinks mixed liquors ; mayhap, gentlemen, you'd like to sit there, 'tis much snugger ; besides we expects a small body of soldiers and a baggage waggon, to stop at the inn in the course of of the night, and they generally comes into this here room to drink a bit. Shall I show you into the little back parlour, gentlemen, no interruption there. (*retires a little, crossing, R.*)

DOZEY. (C. *down a little*) Yaw ! lead the way, boy, and Rodpole, we'll examine those deeds by ourselves, eh ? (*whispering*) Not a word about the flaw in the title—mum !

ROD. (R. C.) No, no, I'm as mute as a measuring pole. Over a bowl of punch we'll settle it by mensuration.

JACK. (*down, R.*) I've made all so comfortable and warm—and sich a raw night outside ; I know'd your honours wouldn't orget Boots, afore you went away ; he, he, he ! (*they give money*)

Thankye, thankye ! he, he, he ! This way, gentlemen. (*shews them out*, R.)

SCENE FOURTH.—*Lights half down. Outside of Farmer Nelson's Cottage, R. 1 E. in a Lane ; night—a gentle storm—lightning &c., 1st grooves.*

Enter CORPORAL SABRE, SERGEANT SAM, and Six SOLDIERS, L.

SERG. Eyes right, Corporal, stand at ease and reconnoitre : plague take this dark night ! the baggage waggon has turned out of the Oxford road into some lane—what the devil's to be done ?

CORP. Here's a cottage, or a pigstye.

SERG. Fire a salute at the door, and if they won't open to the enemy, commence an attack.

CORP. (*knocking*) Hillo ! house, house ! ho ! (*listening*) I hear somebody stirring.

SERG. Discharge another volley.

CORP. (*knocking*) Hillo ! ho ! within there !

Enter FARMER NELSON *from cottage*, R. 1 E.

FARM. Who's there ? If ye be highwaymen, this is not the house—move on, I pray ; content is the only wealth under these rafters, that you cannot rob us of.

CORP. Is the old fool dreaming ? Highwaymen ! see you not that we are soldiers of the king ? We've lost our way in the storm—come you and set us right.

FARM. Most willingly ; I crave your pardon.

CORP. 'Tis a shame, Sam, that these highwaymen should cast such a reflection on gentlemen of our cloth.

SERG. A shame that they are not all hung up to whiten like belts on a pipeclay day. Pray, old gentleman, which is the way to Oxford ?

FARM. Oxford !

CORP. Yes, we've missed the road ; don't you see the waggon sticking in the lane ?—this is not the high road, sure ?

FARM. No, and if it be to Oxford you are marching, I speed that way myself in the morning early.—It matters little, I'll e'en there to-night and be your guide ; these lanes are dark and dangerous, and full of windings as a labyrinth. I will procure a light and on before. (*exit into cottage, and return immediately with lantern—locks door.*)

CORP. That's a good soul ! you shall rewarded be with brave refreshments at the "George Inn."

FARM. The "George Inn !" the Inn on the Oxford road ! 'Tis the very house I'm going to. The landlord, Jonathan Bradford is my son-in-law, and to-morrow is my daughter's twentieth birth-day. They are a happy, thriving, honest couple—she is

my only child, of six, remaining—the very image of her poor dear mother ! When I look on her, and see her sweet face lit up with happiness, and the innocent children climbing my knees, it seems as though the features of the gone, did through their eyes beam forth ; then I forget what a desolate old man I am, and—But I beg pardon ! (*crosses to L.*) If you're not a father, you'll find better excuses for me, Mr. Soldier, at the inn on the Oxford road. (*Music—they exeunt, L.*)

SCENE FIFTH.—*Exterior of the Inn, divided into Four Apartments. (No. 1) A Two Bedded Room, with window opening to a tiled roof. One Bed or sofa (practicable) the other just on ; a chair, L. ; table near bed, with a written newspaper on it. (No. 2) A One Bedded Room, with a window opening to the same tiled roof ; table, R., and chair. (No. 3) Little Back Parlour ; table and two chairs in centre seen through the window. (No. 4) The Bar seen through window—punch bowl—glass of brandy and water, &c., on bar ; in centre of all a door, and sign of the “ George Inn.”*

Enter JONATHAN BRADFORD, with lantern, and MR. HAYES, R. Music.

HAYES. Thanks, landlord, thanks ! 'tis ever thus my maxim to visit my horse ere I retire to sleep.

BRAD. An excellent rule. I would 'twere more adopted ; but some are too apt to forget in self enjoyment the duty that belongs to others, even of their own species.

HAYES. What o'clock is it ?

BRAD. Just past eleven, sir.

HAYES. My watch is broken—most unfortunately, and will not go ! What shall I do to-morrow, when most I need its service ?

BRAD. We have a watchmaker half a mile from hence—shall I send the watch to him early in the morning ? 'Twill be back ere noon.

HAYES. (*gives watch*) I pray you do so ; and now to bed—but bring me, ere I sleep, a tankard of canary and spring water—I am feverish.

BRAD. I'll place it on your table, sir. Take care of the step.
Enters the house by door, C.

Enter ANN, No. 4, with candle, arranges room, &c.

ANN. To-morrow my dear father will arrive. How happy I am he so approves of Jonathan.

Dan's Room, (1)

Mr. Hayes's Room, (2)

R. *Parlour, (3)*

Bar, (4)

L.

Enter JACK, showing in DOZEY and RODPOLE, into No. 3—they sit—JACK puts candle on table.

DOZEY. (R. of table) There, now go along and shut the door.

ROD. And tell your master we must have the punch directly.

JACK. Aye, aye, your honours. *Exit L., into the bar.*

DOZEY. Here are the papers.

ANN. My father said he could never endure children as he had endured his own; but our little Jane—so like my mother—he quite spoils that child—ha, ha!

(JONATHAN mixing punch at the bar—JACK waiting)

Enter SALLY, with candle, shewing in MACRAISY and CALEB, into No. 1, R.

SALLY. Would you like your beds warmed, sirs?

MACRA. Nothing but a glass of brandy and water.

CALEB. And a little tiny bit of sugar from them lips of—
Goes to kiss her, she slaps his face and exits, R.

MACRA. That's just bekays you don't mind your manners and it sarves you right. *(sits in his chair and takes off neckcloth)*

ANN. Here comes the gentleman. *Exit L.*

Enter JACK, No. 3, L.

JACK. Here's the punch, your honours.

DOZEY. Place it on the table.

JACK places punch on table and exits into bar.

Enter MR. HAYES, No. 2, R.

HAYES. Suddenly I feel with sleep overcome—

Let me see; I am to give for the estate

Eight hundred pounds: trees—out-houses.

That will be— *(counts his fingers and falls asleep)*

Enter JACK, No. 1, R.

JACK. Here's the brandy and water.

MACRA. Faith! it's a brave lad you are; good night, jewel.

Exit JACK, R.

Caleb, just open the casement, and see what manner of night it is outside.

CALEB. *(opens window)* O dear! there's a tom cat!

MACRA. *(produces vial)* My ould schame—a drap o' laudanum—when I don't want dat fool to be awake—at all, at all. *(empties vial into brandy and water)* Oh, oh! *(affecting spasms)*

CALEB. (R.) Vy, vot's the matter now?

MACRA. Cold shivering! there's my coat! there's—Oh! I can't bear it—one of my fits—cover me up warm, warm! *(falls on sofa—CALEB covers him up)*

CALEB. (*crosses to table, L.*) Von't you drink your nice brandy and vater?

MACRA. No, no; drink it you—don't disturb me.

CALEB. (*sitting down in chair*) I von't, you may depend on't. How generous; all the brandy and vater mine! Ven he snores I'll steal down and get a bit o' supper—a Velsh rabbit. What's this—a Lunnon newspaper? von't I read it. (*takes newspaper and sits reading*)

Enter JONATHAN, into No. 2, L., with a tankard of canary, a lemon and knife on a tray. ANN and SALLY busy in bar, (No. 4)

BRAD. My good guest asleep! I'll not disturb him; but place on this table the canary and water. He said not whether he should like lemon—no matter, the lemon too I'll leave, and this knife—he'll wake and serve himself softly! *Retires, L.*

ANN. (*to SALLY, in bar*) Go to bed, Sally: the children must not remain longer alone, and you must rise early; Mr. Hayes will require his breakfast.

SALLY. Good night, missus.

Exit, L.

(*ANN and JONATHAN busy at bar—DOZEY asleep, and RODPOLE drinking and examing papers*)

CALEB. (*reading and sipping*) I must look for my friends. (*reads*) "Old Bailey,"—that's not it—"The Parliament will dissemble on the 21st, to take into consideration a young woman out of place." Plague take it, I've lost the place. Yaw! vot's this? "If the young man vot ran away from his apprenticeship, in Seven Dials—" Vy, that's me! "If the young man vot ran—vill return to his unhappy parents—his unhappy—" Ha, ha, ha! "He will be received with hopen harms, and his misconduct overlooked by his master, the watchmaker, who has vound up the affair with the young man's unappiest of mothers. He will be allowed to sugar his own tea, and butter his toast on both sides." Here's news! won't I be hoff! won't I; but I mustn't let him hear me, nor the pistol neither, or that'll be going hoff also! (*MACRAISY snores*) He's as fast asleep as a vatch, vot hasn't been vound up for a week, I vonder if his pistol's asleep too? Here's to my old mother—(*drinks*) She's a good 'un—she is. (*looking at paper*) "If the young man vot—ha—yaw! he, he, he! I'm a falling into a doze, with not having nothing to eat since dinner. "If the young villain!" No, no; if the young man—the—I'm going—yes—he going to—yaw!

(*falls asleep—music—MACRAISY appears watching him, gets cautiously up—surveys CALEB's features—opens the window and is getting out, when CALEB exclaims, asleep, "If the young man vot ran away—" MACRAISY starts, recoils, looks at CALEB, exults, and gets out of the window—a flash of lightning*)

JACK comes from the door, C., with a lantern in his hand.

JACK. Hang that there baggage waggon! I wishes 'twere stickt in some clay pit; the horse dragons too,—vot for be they obligated to travel i' the night? now must I go and bundle down so many trusses o' hay, and so many pecks o' oats, just because—and I can't get to Sally. I—that's the window, Sally! Sally! (*going, L.*)

Enter JONATHAN at C. door.

BRAD. Jack, to the stable—the soldiers will be here in a few minutes. What are you going after there?

JACK. (*returning to R.*) Going to go back again, master. (*aside*) Who would be Boots, I wonder?

Exit, R., whistling—thunder and lightning.

BRAD. 'Tis a rough, dark night. I hope the waggon may not mistake the road! no, I think I hear the sound of horses' feet. Ann! Ann!

Re-enters house—seen busy and ANN also in bar—clock strikes twelve to music.

HAYES. (*starting*) Twelve o'clock! have I been sleeping all this time? Oh, here's the canary and water. (*drinks*) Now to place the cash on this table. The money is quite safe—(*MACRAISY at window*) yes; these guineas are all right: one, two, three. Hold! I shall disturb the sleepers—I'll leave the purse on the table, and since it is so late, and I have to rise so early, I'll even rest myself, in this chair, as I am. (*goes to sleep*)

Music.—Flash of lightning shows DAN getting in at window—he cautiously enters—blows out light, and endeavours to steal purse—HAYES starts up, and DAN seizes him by the throat

HAYES. Who is there? What hand grasps my throat? Landlord! villain! (*MACRAISY finds the purse and is escaping, when HAYES finds knife and seizes him*) Plunderer! my money, or this knife!

MACRA. Knife! in my own defence then. (*music—in the struggle the purse falls, and MACRAISY gets possession of the knife and stabs HAYES, who falls with a groan*) Divil! where's the purse?

(*searching—HAYES faintly calling “help!” “murder!”*)

BRAD. (*during the above*) Hark, wife! what scuffle is that? Mr. Hayes' voice! a light, wife! quick! this way, wife!

Exeunt L., with ANN, who carries the candle.

MACRA. Ah, detected! (*as he hurries out of window, a broad flash of lightning*)

ROD. Lawyer, awake—a cry of murder! This way——

Exeunt, R.

Enter JONATHAN and ANN, L.—No. 2.

BRAD. Great heaven—Mr. Hayes murdered! This knife stained with blood—this purse upon the ground—horror! (*picking them up*)

HAYES. (*recovering*) A light—ah! my purse—that knife in his hands!—my assassin then—he—pardon— (*dies*)

BRAD. (*wildly*) This purse—this knife—in my hands! What dreadful words—distraction—wife!

ANN. Husband!

BRAD. Who has done this?

Enter DOZEY and RODPOLE, into room No. 2.

DOZEY. You villain, you! He said it—you!

BRAD. Let me go into the air! my brain burns! He, with his dying lips—what has he said? Help—justice—justice!

Rushes out, L.—Music.

ANN. Jonathan! Jonathan!

DOZEY. Monster! you escape us not.

Exeunt, L.

Music continues, while MACRAISY enters No. 1, through window, exults, and wakes CALEB.

MACRA. Up, up, fool!

CALEB. What's the matter?

MACRA. Murder's the matter! Listen, follow!

CALEB. Murder! Oh, dear! Am I murdered? *Exeunt, R.*

Music.—Enter JACK, lighting in FARMER NELSON, CORPORAL, SERGEANT, and six SOLDIERS, R.

FARMER. 'Tis a cold night, gentlemen; but a comfortable welcome waits within, I'll warrant.

(cries within—"Villain! Murderer!")

FARMER. Murderer! Who is he? (*JONATHAN rushes out of door, followed by ANN*)

BRAD. I am he: at least they say so—he—Am I a murderer, Ann? am I, eh?

ANN. (*clinging to him*) No, no, no!

DOZEY entering C., down, L.

DOZEY. I say yes! As a magistrate, I bid you, soldiers, to your arms—let not that man nor woman either escape. Mr. Hayes, who slept last night in the room above the bar, has been robbed and murdered! We detected that man and that woman in his chamber—the blood-stained knife—the purse in his hands—this watch too, I took from Bradford's pocket: it was Mr. Hayes's—the dying man himself affirmed Bradford the murderer. Let him not escape!

BRAD. Oh, wife, wife! what terrible doom overwhelms us
Lost, lost, lost!

ANN. Husband—father—my poor children!

FARM. This is some horrible illusion, son!

BRAD. Innocent!

ANN. Oh, my children!

*Music—the SOLDIERS present their muskets—JONATHAN
ANN, FARMER NELSON, SALLY and JACK, forming
group in the centre—RODPOLE and DOZEY at L., pointing
to JONATHAN—MACRAISY at window of little Parlour
No. 3, watching during the whole of the Scene. Thunder
and lightning.*

END OF ACT FIRST.

ACT II.

SCENE FIRST.—*Interior of Nelson's Cottage.*

Enter SALLY, R.

SALLY. Heigho! I wasn't miserable enough before, but a
these shocking things must happen to render my life a burthe
to me. My poor master! my dear missus! both condemned for
the murder of Mr. Hayes. But I'll never believe as they are
culpable—it's impossible! He, so civil, so good-natured! she
I never seed her hurt a fly! The aged father, too!—at his
time of life—'tis crazy and childish quite he's getting. The
those dear children—my heart's ready to break when I look
at 'em. I'm sure I wishes Jack would return from the village
for I'm just as if I seed Mr. Hayes's ghost at every corner
of the room.

Enter JACK, L.

Ugh! what's that?

JACK. Don't thee go to be frightful, Sally—it be only I.

SALLY. I be main glad thee be cum'd back again! I, a lone
woman.

JACK. It's summat to be glad at anything, as this wicked
world goes, Sally. But how's old master now?

SALLY. I do believe that he be running mad, he do look a
horrid wild. He came in about an hour since and did put his
fingers about little Jane's throat, and stared so oddly, I thought
he wur going to strangle the child; and when I screamed, he
called me Ann, and fell a crying; and now he is in the garden
talking to the trees as if they were rational creatures. Look
how he walks up and down—his white hair streaming in the

wind, and his arms swinging to and fro, for all the world as if he was going to spring over the rose hedge!

JACK. Oh, Sally, how will I ever be able to tell him the ill news I do bring from the village?

SALLY. What news?

JACK. Our poor master and missus have been brought there; they are in the strong room. I have seen 'em—spoken wi' 'em.

SALLY. You! How are they? how do they look? what did they say.

JACK. They are very ill, Sally—sadly and pale they do look; and they did send me for to bring them old master and the two children, that they might bid 'em good bye for the last time!

SALLY. And still they say that they be innocent?

JACK. Yes, both; though few, I fear, believe it. The knife, the watch, the sending of you and I out of the way that night—all—I shall never dare to pass the heath again after sunset; yet I don't think measter's ghost would follow me. It wasn't my fault if my evidence did serve to criminate him. I would give my life, now to save him.

SALLY. But why afraid to cross the heath?

JACK. Because he's to be hanged in chains there—on the green hill, about half a mile from the inn.

SALLY. O, mercy on me! poor Mr. Nelson; you may see the hill from that very window. I shall never dare to tell him a single word.

Enter FARMER NELSON, R.—his face pale—his looks wild—he crosses to the centre; a CHILD follows him on, and goes to SALLY.

FARM. I want no telling—I know it all!—all! The wind whistles it in mine ear as I pass. Your son—your daughter—murderer! murderess! But then I hear an angel, with a sweet soft voice, sometimes murmuring innocent! innocent! innocent! That's consoling! that's comfort! How my heart aches! (*crosses to L.*)

JACK. What can we say to him?

FARM. Ann! Ann! (*crosses to C.*) Give me a draught of water, Ann. No—I forgot—she is no longer here. My child! my daughter! they have torn her from me! They have peeled off the green ivy from the old winter tree, and left it in its snow, desolate alone! Who are you?

SALLY. Lawks, master! don't you know me?

FARM. Not I—I know nothing—nobody! The world is all illusion—all deception—cruelty—craft—cunning—wickedness! Friends smile in your face, you think them angels; tear off the vizor—what are they? Demons! demons thirsting for your heart's best blood—even your children! Oh, misery! He! She! (*the CHILD runs to him*)

CHILD. (*crying*) Grandfather, I want my mother. Where is she?

FARM. (*shuddering*) Ugh! hence, accursed one! or——(*the CHILD recoils*) Stay—stay—I'll not harm thee, darling. Come nearer—close—closer to my heart. (*the CHILD slowly goes to him, as if afraid*) Let me look on thy face. Those meek blue eyes—such were thy mother's—sparkling full of joy! Just such a rosy beauteous child was she. Oh, heavens! I remember well the summer morning, when on the grass there in the flower garden, her first step was made; how I rejoiced—how proud my poor wife was! Alas! alas! but those were happy days!

SALLY. Dear master!

FARM. Say nothing—tell nobody! It's a shame for an old man to weep—but I am better now. Come, child, come; I'll take thee to thy mother. Come, come, come! (*takes the CHILD under his right arm, and hurries off, L.*)

JACK. Kind master! kind missus! I be young and can earn money by labour, and never shall a morsel pass my lips that the dear children do not share. I'll follow him—you bring the other child. *Exit, L.*

SALLY. I will—I will! I have nursed them from their cradles; I love them as if they were my own, and now they are unfortunate I love them ten times dearer. There the poor dear is fast asleep—(*pointing off, R.*)—pity it should ever wake. Yet why should I say that? 'Tis true that there be one above who watches and gives crumbs to the sparrow: and it cannot be that He will turn his face away from innocence like this—no, no, no!

Exit, R., as if to fetch the CHILD from the cradle to follow
FARMER NELSON.

SCENE SECOND.—*The Strong Room in the village. Table &c.*
L. C. *Chair or stool, R. C. Lights down.*

JONATHAN *discovered.*

BRAD. How rapidly time's wheel runs on;
To-day condemn'd, to-morrow executed!
So it is—so will be. Well, all must perish;
Yes; all created things: and why then fear?
Why then repine? (*pause*) But my wife!
Why did I think of that, which drags me back again
And plies the torturing lever to my heart,
Breaking hope's last sinew? Death, death, where art thou?

Enter SERGEANT SAM.

SERG. Thy wife.

Exit, L.

Enter ANN, L.

BRAD. Ann!

ANN. Jonathan! (*they embrace*)

BRAD. This one embrace repays for all my anguish;
All that I have suffer'd—all that I can suffer.

ANN. And I—oh, now I feel quite happy!

To be near thee, to press thy hand—to hear thy voice.

The worst is past—they will not part us again.

'Twill comfort me, at the close of life's short journey

To look thus into thy face. (*gazing*) Oh, heavens! thou'rt
much chang'd!

BRAD. And thou also, Ann.

ANN. Both—with sorrow, not with guilt. No, no,—
Not with guilt!

BRAD. I thank thee for that word.

Ann, dost thou fear much to die?

ANN. I am prepared. I die with thee—innocent.

BRAD. And to suffer ignominy?

ANN. (*devoutly*) 'Tis heaven's will!

BRAD. The pang! oh, heaven! the pang!

ANN. 'Tis heaven's will!

BRAD. Ah, Ann! was it not enough, myself,

But thou——

ANN. No more—no more! It is His will!

We must forego all—forgive all—

Even the true murderer, for whom we suffer!

Who he is—what he is—alas, we know not—

His crime, though heaped on us, we must forgive.

BRAD. My wife, thou dost teach me what I ought to be,

And sham'st my manhood with thy pure fortitude.

Hence with the world—we'll talk of heaven only,

The land of promise—

Where the storm beats not; where the sky, unclouded,

Shines ever on a calmness like its own.

ANN. 'Tis a sweet picture! Would we were there, my husband,

Else long I cannot bar the doors of memory.

I am as the lark, that vaults and vaults,

Resolving still to go—still coming back again,

To its wild nest, and the dear fledglings left

Without its care.

BRAD. Our children!

ANN. Aye, our helpless children! that's the link

That fetters me. Once I saw them, ill,

Both—I thought them dying—how I wept, repined;

It was wicked. I am punished now, Jonathan.

I am their mother, yet I'd have them there—

(*pointing to the earth*)

That in these arms I might entwine them, so,
And bear them up to heaven. They must remain. (*mourn-
fully*)

BRAD. 'Tis heaven's will!

ANN. Poor orphans! here, despised, defenceless!

BRAD. 'Tis heaven's will!

ANN. A mother! I did forget!

BRAD. 'Twas natural.

ANN. I am myself again.

*Enter FARMER NELSON, L., with the two CHILDREN—ANN clasps
them with a wild and frantic scream.*

Oh! Ha, ha, ha! (*on her knees*)

BRAD. Father!

FARM. (*crosses to him*) Son! (*shaking hands*)

ANN. Why, what a rosy cheek is this—a red, sweet lip!

And this, too, my young spring bud. (*kissing it*)

Look at them, Jonathan—kiss them!

BRAD. I do, Ann, for the last time. (*kissing them*)

O! in this kissing would my heart could burst!

CHILD. (*R. of ANN*) Dear mother, why don't you come home?

ANN. Home! I—I will, soon.

CHILD. (*gets to L. of ANN, and takes her gown and pulls it to-
wards L.*) Soon! why not now—now?

ANN. How shall I tell it them—how will they understand?

Home! where is their home? no mother's voice,

No father's admonition! Outcasts—abject—

Branded with the name of infamy.

Shunned—degraded! Oh, my children, my children!

What will become of them? (*wringing her hands*)

FARM. (*coming down, L.*) Ann!

As to thee I was a father, so I to them,

But I am old and feeble, and my years

Are numbered short; the grave is my home—

There shall they rest with me, as the young flowers

Are strewn upon the corse. In the cold earth

We'll hide ourselves; buried deep—deep

As shame and misery can dig.

ANN. Father! alas, how wild he looks!

Oh, father, speak to me! it is your daughter Ann—

Your only daughter—don't you know me, father?

No reply! Give me your blessing, father! Father,

Your blessing! (*kneeling*) Your blessing!

FARM. (*raising her quickly*) Blessing! cravest thou a bless-
ing of the mildew,

Whose office 'tis to blight the golden corn,

And ere the sickle of the husbandman

Can gather it healthful to his garner home,
Pound it into black ashes!

ANN. Father!

FARM. Unhand me! 'tis not ye are guilty.

I am leprous! contagious;

All I loved have withered, one by one—

Wife! children! kindred! and you the last!

Let me begone!

BRADFORD *all this while is utterly absorbed in grief at the table, not noticing what is going forward; he comes down, R.*

On those children never to gaze again.

There are roses on their cheeks—the canker

Of this brow shall never blight them,

As——let me be gone—I know myself—I—

Let me be gone!

Rushes out, L.

Enter SERGEANT, L.

ANN. Misery can no further.

The picture is too terrible! *(covering her face with her hands)*

BRAD. (R. to SERGEANT) Take them away in silence!—*(crosses to CHILDREN)*

God bless ye! go! go!

CHILD. *(as it reaches the wing)* Mother!

ANN. *(recovering, crosses to CHILDREN)* That thrilling voice!
My children!

Separate us! never! I will not—I will not!

No! no! no! *(the CHILDREN are led off—ANN falls senseless into BRADFORD'S arms)*

BRAD. Oh, that those eyes could open only in a better world!
My wife! my wife! for thee I suffer!

Enter SERGEANT, L., with a paper.

SERG. Good news, Master Bradford! here's a reprieve for your wife.

BRAD. A reprieve for my wife! then I am content. My children will not weep in vain for their mother. Ann—Ann, here is good news! a reprieve——

ANN. *(recovering, and eagerly)* For thee?

BRAD. No, better—for thee!

ANN. I'll not accept it! no, we'll die together—

I'll not survive thee! I cannot survive thee!

We will die—yes—the judge said it—

Together—together!

BRAD. Ann, if you would not add to my regrets,

Forget not you are a mother—our children.

Go, wife, go! Wipe the tears from their young eyes.

When the world mocks them, tell them, thou, how innocent

Their father was. Is it nothing thou art spar'd for that?
 Go, Ann—I know thou'lt not forget me.
 And I—if those who watch above
 May linger near to frail humanity—
 Thou understand'st—(*kissing her*) Bless thee—go!

ANN.

No, no!

CHILD. (*without*) Mother, mother!

BRAD.

Ah—listen!

ANN.

My little ones!

BRAD. They call thee, Ann; let them not call thee unnatural.

To die with me were vain, to live for them is noble.

Go—'tis my last command!

CHILD. (*entering, L.*)

Mother, mother!

ANN. Husband! child! support me nature!

Death to this were easy. Divide, my heart—

Half here, half there! Oh, agony, agony!

But no—but no—I—Jonathan—

She attempts to return to JONATHAN, but sinks exhausted in the SERGEANT'S arms, the CHILD clinging to her, on her R. and exclaiming, "Mother!" They exeunt, L., and JONATHAN BRADFORD is left on his knees in silent agony

BRAD. Now, but one more effort to die!

She is spared! I'll not dare to murmur,

But here sit down in silent meditation,

And think no more of earth. (*noise*)

Hark! what's that?

JACK. (*putting his head through the hole in the ceiling on the R.*) Master!

BRAD. Who calls?

JACK. Are you quite alone?

BRAD. Yes, entirely.

JACK. (*putting a rope through the hole*) 'Tis I, Jack. I crept all along the roofs of the houses—nobody could see me—with the hay-knife I cut this hole through the thatch. Master here's a rope! Haste, escape!

BRAD. Escape! No, no, no—I'm innocent!

JACK. Master, if you're ever so innocent they'll hang you in the morning, If you could but conceal yourself among the tombs for a while, the true murderer may yet be brought to light. Think, master, you may then return to the inn to my poor missus—to the dear children!

BRAD. Heaven speaks in the voice of this honest lad; yes—

Time might be gained to prove my innocence.

My wife—my children! I will—I will escape.

A still voice whispers to my soul,

Freedom! innocence! Yes, I obey its dictates!

Music.—Places the stool beneath the rope, and begins climbing as the scene closes.

SCENE THIRD.—*Outside of a Church. A printed bill posted on the door. A vault open on L.*

Enter CALEB, R., attired as a Ratcatcher—a belt with painted rats round him—followed by DAN MACRAISY, in tatters; a box on his back with “Ferrets” inscribed thereon.

CALEB. Here's a pretty set out! I disguised as a ugly ratcatcher, just to serve your purpose; because you like to travel incog, as you say. I tells you I'm hadwertised for; master's furguve me, and I vishes to dissolve partnership with your firm, and go home to Seven Dials.

MACRA. Sure, is it an ungrateful scoundrel you are? after all my lessons not one clever trick have you played—not so much as dacently picked a pocket. How are you to pay me for your board and eddication I'd like to know?

CALEB. Board! I'm literally starved. A hempty watch-case has more inside nor I. Besides, I don't like the dishonest wagabone sort of life you vishes me to lead.

MACRA. That's it. Haven't I consulted your taste? set you up in a respectable profession—made you a gentleman ratcatcher.

CALEB. Oh, if they could but see me at Seven Dials. I doesn't like rat-catching. I can't catch no rats—I'm afeard of 'em; they knows it, and sits and laughs at me.

MACRA. I'll tell what it is, darling—you know of my breaking into the farm-house last week, in which you had not the courage to join me, though may be, you'd find courage enough to peach; but that won't do—you and I don't part partnership so! No, if you attempt to leave me without my permission at all, at all, I'll send a brace of ferrets after you that shall lay you as nately by the heels as if you were stuck in a bog, hoots upermost. It isn't over useful you've been, you dirty disagreeable devil; but it's likely I'll turn you to account. You can read newspapers, and dem like palavers can't you? and as larning's one of dem effeminate superfluties that I despises, beyond signing my own name—a jintleman should know how to sign his own name—jist rade me all the small print in that blackguard bit of a bill, for may be the name spells something very like—

CALEB. (*reading the bill on the church door*) “Dan Macraisy alias O'Connor!” Vy that's you.

MACRA. Or some other jintleman who has been blackguard enough to borrow my name. As I suspected! Rade, rade!

CALEB. They don't mean me by the *alias*, do they? Vell I'll read the paper. “A hundred pounds reward for the apprehension of Dan Macraisy, *alias* O'Connor, *alias* &c. &c. &c. who, it is suspected broke into the farm-house of Mr.

Brown, of Frogmore, on the night of—" There—there! your description exactly. How will you ever get out of this!

MACRA. Oh, aisy—shift it on some other fool's shoulders, I'm thinking.

CALEB. It is not possible.

MACRA. Wait awhile ago and you shall see it wid your two ugly eyes. (*bell tolls*) Hark!

CALEB. It's the church bell a tolling for the funeral of M. Hayes.

MACRA. (*agitated*) Mr. Hayes!

CALEB. Yes—and yonder comes the funeral. (*looking L.*)

MACRA. (*starting*) This way, come! (*crosses to R.*) Ha, what men are those right a-head there? the spalpeens!

CALEB. If ever I saw thief-taking hoficers, them's the ones—Vot can they vant here?

MACRA. Me they want! sure don't I know the big black guards.—What'll I do now?

CALEB. (*coaxingly, and crosses to R.*) I'll run and put them on a wrong scent t'other way.

MACRA. (*seizing him by the tail of his coat, and turning him round, L.*) No you don't faith, dear! and I'll not trust ye. It into this here sort of rabbit's burrow we'll be after going till the coast is clear. (*going to vault door*)

CALEB. In there? vy it's a hold wault! I'm nervous! dares no more go in there than I dares to swallow a screech owl! (*bell tolls*)

MACRA. (*presenting a pistol*) Nearer comes the funeral that way—nearer comes the officers this. Quick, quick, or it's dead man you'll be before you get inside the vault, I reckon! (*bell tolls*) Ugh! that's an ugly ill-tongued baste of a bell, won't I stop up my ears entirely. In—ugh—in! *Exeunt into vault, &c.*

SCENE FOURTH.—*Interior of the Vault.—In the centre is a large Tomb, on the L. of it a broken piece of stone, L. C. is a grated window nearly at top, supposed to be on a level with the earth outside. On each side coffins are piled one above another.*

Enter CALEB, L., driven forward by MACRAISY.

CALEB. (L.) This is vorse than the shades in Common Garden on a vet day. I sees a nobgoblin in every nook. What—what's that? I could have sworn I seed a face peeping from the old ivy there.

MACRA. Ha, ha, ha! sure it's of your own shadow you'll be after being afraid of next. Ha, ha, ha!

CALEB. Now don't laugh.

MACRA. Not laugh!—Why not? haven't I just doubled the gallows-hunters?—they won't think of hunting in here, I calculate.

CALEB. (*gravely*) Mr. Dan, Mr. Dan! It's cotched you'll be, and hanged for the robbery at Frogmore. I see the gallows above your head, and the rope about your neck, I does!

MACRA. (*laughing*) No, sure! did you ever see dat crature Punch in the puppet-show; don't he contrive to stick de neck of somebody else in de noose instead of his own?

CALEB. He, he, he! that always makes me laugh. Ha, ha, ha!

MACRA. Faith it's a good joke of Mr. Punch! and won't I do the same thing?

CALEB. How, how, Mr. Dan?

MACRA. Sit down here, my darlin, and I'll convince you in the most elegant manner possible. Take a sate, honey!—It's not proud I am.

CALEB *sits on piece of stone, L. of tomb*—MACRAISY *on it, R., using the tomb as a table.*

MACRA. Now you see dis bit o' paper, and dis pen and ink-bottle. (*takes them out of his ferret box, and lays them before* CALEB) And ain't you a bit of a scholar? and won't you wid your own ugly fist, write what I shall tell you, wid your own beautiful hand?

CALEB. Certainly; now for it—I'm quite ready.

MACRA. Dat's well. Date June 17th, year 1736. I do confess.

CALEB. I do—(*spelling*)—konfiss——

MACRA. Dat I alone, did rob the house of Mr. Brown, of Frogmore——

CALEB. (*aside*) He's going to make a confession to have himself hanged, that I may get the hundred pounds reward for his apprehension—that's an ansome vay of renumerating me for my trouble. Vell?

MACRA. By the powers, it's very sorry I am, that poor Jonathan Bradford is going to be executed. I've been thinking now, if some solitary, half starved, poor divil of a fellow, or whom nobody in the world would grieve at all, at all; would confess that he did murder dis Hayes, Jonathan Bradford and his wife, might be saved intirely.

CALEB. (*aside*) Vy he's going to make a martyr on himself, or the sake of poor Jonathan and his family. What a noble hero.

MACRA. (CALEB *writing after him, and mis-spelling the words*) Vrite: I did the murder of Mr. Hayes. I stole from my own asement to his chamber; I stabbed him in the struggle with knife which lay on the table, and heard footsteps, and fled he way I came; Jonathan Bradford is innocent—I did it myself intirely.

CALEB. (*writing*) "Jonathan Bradford is innocent!" with a dash—"I did it myself intirely." Vy, somehow this reads exactly like the truth. Vot am I to do next?

MACRA. (*starting up*) Sign dat paper!

CALEB. Mercy on us! I—I—Mr. Dan?

MACRA. Yes, darlin; but it's marely as a *witness*, dat's all.

CALEB. If you please I don't like—"I did it myself intirely"—I dare say indeed. (*dropping the pen*) I've lost the pen.

MACRA. (*presenting pistol*) You've dropped it—there it is—pick it up, and sign instantly.

CALEB. (*falling on his knees*) What will become of me? Didn't some one stir?

MACRA. Divil! no evasion—sign!

CALEB. Vell then, turn away the pistol—I will sign; but the sight of that pistol makes me tremble so!

MACRA. (*turning the pistol behind him to the R.*) Now, villain! or in two minutes, or you are a dead man!

BRADFORD *rushes from wing, R. 2 E., and seizing the pistol, turns DAN over to R.*

BRAD. You, villain! you are the dead man! (*picture*)

CALEB. Hurray, hurray, hurray!

MACRA. Jonathan Bradford here?

BRAD. Yes, monster! that Jonathan Bradford whom you would have sacrificed: the husband of a wife—the father of children, whom you would have plunged into irretrievable infamy! Heaven hath heard my prayers—heaven hath sent me hither, seeking concealment even in a tomb. To witness for myself; to avenge—to punish thee! Not a moment is to be lost!—Sign that paper: (*bell*) murderer! listen to the knell of thy victim. If within three strokes of that awful summons, you sign not this confession, I swear solemnly, a haggard corse—low shall thy body lie—never to rise again, but in eternal flames!—Sign!

MACRA. Nay, wasn't I about to clare you by writing of dat same paper?

BRAD. Liar and cheat! do I not know thy motive? What availed it whether I, he, or all the world did perish? so thou mightest be secure. (*bell tolls*) Twice the bell hath toll'd, another stroke, and—

MACRA. There, there, 'tis done! (*signs—bell tolls*) But sure it isn't yourself, Mr. Jonathan Bradford, that'll be informing against a poor divil of a fellow before he can fly de country? nor you, Mr. Scrummidge; isn't it old friends we two be? and—

CALEB. Old friends! Old Scratch shall sooner shake me by the hand. Oh, I vishes vot I vos at Seven Dials. *safe out* of your clutches!

BRAD. (*to CALEB*) Fear nothing. (*to MACRAISY*) For you I'll not betray your lurking place—justice, not blood do

require! Beware! the church-yard is thronged by people, following the body of the murdered Hayes to his grave. I go to surrender myself: if thou canst, escape, farewell!—repent! and be assured, that sooner or later guilt is overcome. Away, boy, away!

Music—Exeunt, L.

MACRA. Dan! Dan! boy, Dan! what's come over ye? your heart's gone away altogether! are ye aslape? Infernal curses on yonder spalpeen! I'll follow him—dem papers—where's my knife? here it is, I'll follow! my papers, or it's his heart I'll rip open! (*music—rushing—bell tolls—the coffin is borne by the grated window, R. to L.; BEARERS, MOURNERS, &c.; DAN recoils*) Powers! they are bringing hither the body of Hayes: it's into this vault they are about to deposit it. Sure, shan't I escape at all? Ah! (*the anthem of the dead is faintly heard above*) They are singing the anthem of the dead! I'll not hear it.—Horror! they are lowering the coffin into this vault! I here enclosed—the murderer wid the murdered—alone, shut up! I—I cannot bear it—no; rather than that I'll die—I'll die—die! (*stabs himself*) Ha, ha, ha, die! Ha, ha, ha! (*music—he falls, and is closed in*)

SCENE FIFTH.—*A View near the Inn. (1st grooves)*

Enter JACK and SALLY, R.

JACK. Hold thy tongue, Sally. I tell thee master will never be overtaken; they'll never think to search where I've putten him, and when 'tis dark again—it's in the little thicket, by the churchyard—I'll be there with a stout horse. Maybe he'll get to the seaside soon, and——

SALLY. Ah, but poor missus—they now do refuse to deliberate her from prison, and maybe she'll be hanged in master's stead. Be that English law, think you, Jack?

JACK. No—no, Sally; the law is “catch me, hang me.” But don't you fret any more about it—all will go well, depend upon it. I feels as how master never did—never could commit that there murder. No—no, that's impossible—and if time only can be gained the whole truth will come out. But who the deuce be these a coming here? Lawyer Dozey and four of the soldiers, come to attend the execution. What the plague be they in search of here?

Enter DOZEY, SERGEANT, and four SOLDIERS, L.

DOZEY. You we are in search of, villain!

JACK. Villain! come now, don't you go for to call names. But I suppose you be chopfallen because there's to be no execution. Ha, ha, ha!

DOZEY. Insolent! arrest the fellow. (*SERGEANT advances*)

JACK. Arrest me! what for I'd like to know?

DOZEY. For aiding and abetting in the escape of the condemned prisoner, Jonathan Bradford. Oh, you wicked rogue!

JACK. I tell you what it is, Mr. Lawyer, if such as you did never put their roguery to a worse purpose than helping a poor innocent fellow-cretur to escape from hanging, maybe, Jack Ketch wouldn't catch so many customers. (*aside*) I wonder how he likes that—he, he, he!

DOZEY. Contempt of court! contempt of court! Away with him—away!

SALLY. Oh, mercy—pray!

JACK. "Mercy! pray!" what for? I've done no harm. Maybe they think to frighten I, but it won't do. I knows what I knows, and its devilish little they'll be the wiser, I can tell 'em. Hold up thy head, Sally, and look these fellows in the face like a man. *Exeunt, L.*

SCENE SIXTH.—*The same as in Scene First, Act I. Music.*

Enter SERGEANT SAM, ANN, DOZEY, JACK, SALLY, CORPORAL, and SOLDIERS, L. 2 E.

DOZEY. For Ann Bradford: she must be reconducted to the county prison, till His Majesty's further pleasure be known. With regard to this knave——

JACK. You get's nothing out of me, I can tell you. Don't you be alarmed, missus—though mayhap I does know where master is, they'll be just as likely to get the secret out of that milestone as out of me.

ANN. Faithful servant—heaven will reward thee! My husband at liberty! I dare to hope.

DOZEY. Hope for nothing. If overtaken—you see those soldiers—they have muskets. If, therefore, you know aught, for your own sake——

ANN. Sir, dare not to insult the feelings of a wife. 'Tis for him and my children I suffer—for myself, nothing!

DOZEY. Forward—to prison!

Enter JONATHAN BRADFORD, L. U. E.

BRAD. Stay! Jonathan Bradford is here. (*embraces ANN*)

DOZEY. Ha! the felon!

BRAD. Felon! I'll bear that name no longer.

Look up, my wife—look glad and proudly up—

The proof of my innocence is here—here!

Read this confession of the real assassin.

Read—read! (*JACK takes the paper, and gives it to DOZEY*)

DOZEY. (*looking at the paper*) The confession of the murderer of Mr. Hayes! Signed "Dan Macraisy."

JACK. Why that was the name of the Irishman who slept at our inn on the night of the murder.

DOZEY. May not this paper be a forgery?

BRAD. No, I have a witness. Caleb!

Enter CALEB, L. U. E.

He—he saw the signature administered.

DOZEY. This man does not appear to be respectable enough to be credited upon his oath.

CALEB. I not respectable! I! I'm a respectable watch-maker's 'prentice, of Seven Dials; and though I ran away, I means to run back again. But I tell you I knows all about it; I was close by Dan while he was a writing, I was; and properly frightened Dan looked; and vell he might—how his hand did shake!

DOZEY. Indeed! why?

CALEB. Vy? Vy because Mr. Bradford stood over him all the while with that cursed loaded pistol, which——

DOZEY. Force! force! your evidence is quite conclusive.

CALEB. (*conceitedly*) I knew it would be. *Exit, R.*

DOZEY. As the prisoner has surrendered himself, and all is prepared, the sheriff will consider it his duty immediately to attend the execution.

BRAD. Inflexible destiny! in vain I struggle;

The web which entangles me will not be shaken off;—

Death yearns for me—death will have me.

ANN. Husband, take me with thee; life is hateful;

A dream! a curse! I forsake it—

Father! children! all!

BRAD. No, I will not die upon the scaffold,

A felon's death; I am an innocent man!

Away, Ann! (*putting her aside*) I am armed—

I would not willingly injure another,

But I will defend myself. (*rushing across the stage and presenting pistols*)

SERGEANT. Prisoner, surrender! Soldiers, prepare.

(*ANN screams*)

BRAD. I'm prepared to die;

To die like a man—but not by the halter.

Take my wife. (*she faints in the arms of JACK and SALLY*)

Now do your worst. Fire! (*NELSON rushes down, C. from, L.*)

FARM. Stay! Jonathan is indeed blameless! they have found him—the real assassin! Behold him! behold him!

DAN, *pale and bleeding, is led on L. U. E., by two VILLAGERS, male and female VILLAGERS following.*

MACRA. Yes, I am indeed the real murderer! The gowld dazzled my eyes; I slept in de two-bedded chamber; along the tiling there I crept, and entered the chamber of Hayes. Caleb was with me, but he saw nothing, for I drugged his drink

—but where are my victims? Sure won't you let me see them? (BRADFORD takes his hand—DAN sinks on his knee—SALLY goes into house, and brings out the CHILDREN) Dat paper will tell the rest. It's a villain I've been—a bad, heartless villain—but I am punished. Pardon! pardon! (he falls backwards and dies)

Curtain.

Costumes.—PERIOD 1736.

JONATHAN BRADFORD.—Brown coat, black waistcoat, brown breeches, black boots, and a three-cornered hat.

FARMER NELSON.—Grey coat, breeches and stockings; hair white.

MR. HAYES.—Monmouth coat, green, trimmed with gold lace; breeches and waistcoat to correspond; large black boots.

DAN MACRAISY.—*First Dress*: Claret-coloured coat, silk embroidered waistcoat, white breeches, large black boots, powdered wig, three-cornered hat, cane, &c. *Second Dress*: Rags, resembling the first dress.

CALEB.—*First Dress*: Old-fashioned light brown coat; tawdry flowered waistcoat; plush breeches; hair long and curling; flat three-cornered hat, and black boots. *Second Dress*: Rags to correspond. A belt of painted rats.

JACK.—Short fustian jacket and breeches; red waistcoat, blue stockings, and shoes; hair short and curling.

LAWYER DOZEY.—Old-fashioned black suit.

SURVEYOR RODPOLE.—Ditto, grey.

SERGEANT, CORPORAL, AND SOLDIERS.—Old-fashioned uniform, as worn at the time of the piece.

ANN.—Grey silk gown, white muslin apron and petticoat, round cap and lace lappets, with pink bow on one side; shoes and buckles.

SALLY.—Black gown, orange-coloured quilted petticoat, white apron, flat hat, shoes and buckles.

THE CHILDREN.—Blue frocks, &c.

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